

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 969

By Newton

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Kay Jenkins Cowan of Cleveland, Tennessee for being selected the 2002 Mel Bedwell Small Businessperson of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as accomplished entrepreneurs and community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Kay Jenkins Cowan, who founded and operates the Jenkins Restaurant and Deli; and

WHEREAS, born in Knoxville, Ms. Cowan moved to Cleveland in 1972; in March of 1976, she opened a small delicatessen in what was then known as the Cleveland Mall, with three employees; and

WHEREAS, Kay Jenkins Cowan opened the Jenkins Restaurant and Deli in 1981 on Mouse Creek Road; since that initial opening, the restaurant has expanded to four units with more than 60 employees; and

WHEREAS, this thriving establishment serves an average of 850 customers a day for lunch and dinner; orders "to go" alone number in excess of 65 a day; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cowan attributes her success to consistency in the quality and taste of food, excellent service, good customer relations and a good employee base; her restaurant operation has been often recognized for outstanding food and service, and her employees enjoy a full benefits package including health insurance and a retirement plan; and

WHEREAS, Kay Jenkins Cowan has rendered the Cleveland - Bradley County community invaluable service over the years; as a member of the Civitan Club she served several years as chairman for the Special Olympics, and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cowan's restaurant hosted the first Special Olympics auction, raising \$10,000; in 1985, she accepted an International Civitan Award in Oslo, Norway, for Best Special Olympics worldwide; and

WHEREAS, since its beginnings, Jenkins Restaurant has been a member of the Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce; Kay Jenkins Cowan has served three years on the Chamber board of directors and on various Chamber committees and was instrumental in forming the Convention and Visitors Bureau; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cowan has served as a solicitor for United Way of Bradley County as well as on several budget allocation committees; she served on the Human Rights Committee for Bradley County/Cleveland Developmental Services and has been an active board member for Hiwassee Mental Health; and

WHEREAS, Kay Jenkins Cowan has also given time and financial support to the Museum Center at Five Points, the Cleveland 100, Creating Christmas Memories and to various churches and schools; Jenkins Restaurant is a corporate sponsor of Michigan Avenue School; and

WHEREAS, at the recent kickoff luncheon for Business Development Month, the Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce Business Development Committee named Ms. Cowan the Small Businessperson of the Year, her fourth such presentation; the award was

named in honor of the late Mel Bedwell, one of the organization's most loyal and supportive members; and

WHEREAS, the award is based upon the staying power, growth in number of employees, increase in sales or unit volume, innovativeness of product or services offered, response to adversity and evidence of contribution of the nominee to community-oriented projects; and

WHEREAS, Kay Jenkins Cowan epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Ms. Cowan for her innovative leadership in business and civic causes, her commitment to professional excellence and her dedication to the well-being of the people of Cleveland and Bradley County; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Kay Jenkins Cowan upon being named the Mel Bedwell Small Businessperson of the Year by the Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce and extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.